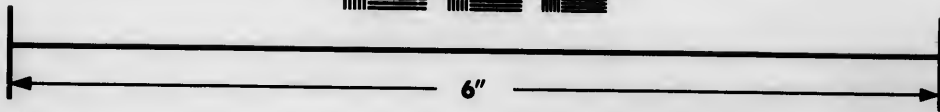
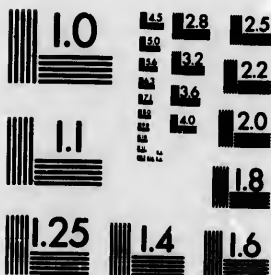


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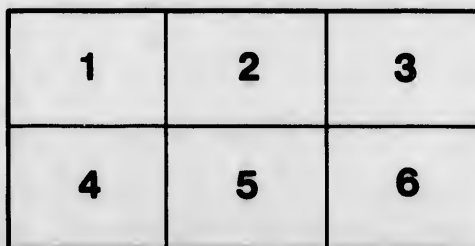
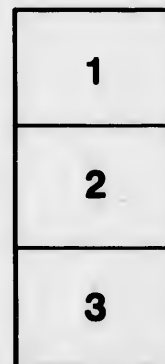
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RECORDS  
OF  
THE FOUNDING  
OF THE  
ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY

BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
THE MARQUIS OF LORNE

AND HER ROYAL HIGHNESS  
THE PRINCESS LOUISE

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# RECORDS OF THE FOUNDING

OF THE

## *Royal Canadian Academy*

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

THE MARQUIS OF LORNE,

AND HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCESS LOUISE.

In the month of February, 1879, the Vice-President of the Ontario Society of Artists, Mr. O'Brien, waited upon His Excellency the Marquis of Lorne, Governor-General of Canada, with a request that His Excellency and Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise would become Patrons of the Society, as Lord Dufferin, the late Governor-General, had previously been.

In acceding to this request, His Excellency expressed the hope that it might not be long before a ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS might be instituted, to be composed of and managed by Canadian Artists.

On May 26th, the new building of the Arts Association of Montreal was opened by His Excellency and Her Royal Highness, and on this occasion the Governor-General again alluded to the prospect of forming a Royal Canadian Academy.

The following report of the proceedings is extracted from the Montreal Gazette :

About 9 o'clock His Excellency the Governor-General and Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise arrived, attended by Major and Mrs. De Winton, and were escorted by the President of the Association to the dais. The Hon. Mr. Justice Mackay, President, then read the following address :—



*To His Excellency the Right Honorable Sir John Douglas Sutherland Campbell, Marquis of Lorne, one of Her Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, and Knight Grand Cross of the most distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Governor-General of Canada, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c., and to Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise :*

On behalf of the Art Association of Montreal, we desire to thank Your Excellency and Your Royal Highness for the honor and advantage conferred upon our Association by the patronage to which you have graciously consented, and also for the favor of Your Excellency's and Your Royal Highness' presence this evening, on the occasion of the opening of our Gallery.

We not only believe that the love of the beautiful in nature and art is a source of some of the purest pleasures of life, but that it stimulates and supports our highest aspirations, and we think that the influence of the Fine Arts is especially important in refining and ennobling those practical aims which necessarily tend to absorb the energies of a people actively engaged in developing the material resources of our young and rapidly growing country. We therefore acknowledge with gratitude the interest which Your Excellency and Your Royal Highness have taken in our efforts, and we feel that the promotion of art could receive no higher or more efficient countenance than in the patronage extended by those who represent here the Crown of England, and in their persons unite illustrious lineage and station with a love of intellectual and æsthetic culture.

In Your Royal Highness we recognize a worthy successor of your noble father, the great and good Prince Albert, encourager, in his lifetime, of all that might tend to improve the public taste and advance the interests of the Fine Arts, and whose ideas and work have so largely contributed to the notable revival of art which this age witnesses.

Although the want of a permanent Gallery had long been felt, probably no step would have been taken, for some time to come, to erect such a building in Montreal, had it not been for the late Mr. Benaiah Gibb's munificent bequest, and the prompt action which he imposed upon us. In addition to his very valuable collection of paintings and several bronzes, he gave and bequeathed to the Association, in trust for the citizens of Montreal, the ground upon which our building stands, and eight thousand dollars in money. Ours is believed to be the first building erected in the Dominion wholly for Fine Art purposes.

We now most respectfully pray your Excellency and your Royal Highness to accept our warmest wishes for your continued welfare and happiness, and we feel, in common with all our fellow-citizens to whose support and encouragement our institution is commended by this auspicious opening, that the taste and liberality of the principal contributor to this foundation receive to-night a

sanction which is gratefully felt by his numerous surviving friends as a tribute most honorable to his memory.

It only remains for us to pray your Excellency and your Royal Highness to declare formally the opening of our Gallery.

Montreal, May 26th, 1879.

J. MACKAY, *President.*

THOS. RYAN, *Vice-President.*

HIS EXCELLENCY responded as follows :—

Ladies and Gentlemen,—This is the first occasion, I believe, on which a large company representing much of the influence and wealth of this great city has met together in order formally to inaugurate the opening of the buildings of an Art Institute. Through the kindness of the President and Vice-President I have already had an opportunity to-day to inspect the works with which this city, through the munificence of Mr. Gibb, has been endowed. I think Montreal can be honestly and warmly congratulated not only upon the possession of a collection which will go far to making her Art Gallery one of the most notable of her institutions, but on having succeeded in getting possession of funds enough, at a time which is certainly by no means peculiarly propitious for the gathering of money, to give a home to this collection in the Gallery in which we are assembled, and to have erected a building large enough to exhibit to advantage many other pictures besides those belonging to the bequest. It is, perhaps, too customary that the speeches of anyone in my position should express an over sanguine view of the hopes and aspirations which find a place amongst the various communities in the country, and I believe the utterances of a Governor-General may often be compared to the works of the great English painter, Turner, who, at all events in his later years, painted his pictures so that the whole of the canvas was illuminated and lost in a haze of azure and gold, which, if it could not be called truthful to nature, had at all events the effect of hiding much of what, if looked at too closely and too accurately represented, might have been considered detrimental to the beauty of the scene. If I were disposed to accept the criticisms of some artists I should be inclined to endorse the opinion I have heard expressed among them, that one of the few wants of this country is a proper appreciation and countenance of art, but the meeting here to-day, to inaugurate what I hope will be the reign of art in Montreal, enables me to disprove such an assertion, and to gild over with a golden hue more true than that of many of Turner's pictures this supposed spot upon

the beauty of our Canadian atmosphere. Certainly in Toronto, here and elsewhere, gentlemen have already employed their brush to good effect, and I shall not more particularly mention their names because they will readily occur to many here. We may look forward to the time when the influence of such associations as yours may be expected to spread until we have here, what they formerly had in Italy, namely, such a love of art that, as was the case with the great painter Correggio, our Canadian artists may be allowed to wander over the land scot free of expense because the hotel-keepers will only be too happy to allow them to pay their bills by the painting of some small portrait or of some sign for "mine host." Why should we not soon be able to point to a Canadian school of painting, for in the appreciation of many branches of art and in proficiency in science Canada may favorably compare with any country. It was only the other day that Mrs. Scott-Siddons told me that in her readings and recitations of poetry, and especially of Shakespeare's plays, she found her Canadian audiences more enthusiastic and intelligent than any she had met. Our Dominion may claim that the voices of her daughters are as clear as her own serene skies, and who can deny that in music Nature has been most ably assisted by Art, when from one of the noble educational establishments in the neighborhood of this city Mademoiselle Albani was sent forth to charm the critical audiences of Europe and America? Canada may hold her head high in the kindred fields of Science, for who is it who has been making the shares of every Gas Company in every city fall before the mere rumors of his genius but a native Canadian, Mr. Edison, the inventor of the electric light? In another branch of art her excellence must also be conceded. In photography, it cannot be denied that our people challenge the most able competition. I have, to be sure, heard complaints with reference to the manner with which, by means of photographs, Canadians are depicted to the outside world. I have heard it stated that one of the many causes of the gross ignorance which prevails abroad with reference to our beautiful climate, is owing to the persistence with which our photographers love to represent chiefly our winter scenes. But this has been so much the case, and these photographs excite so much admiration, that I hear that in the Old Country the practice has been imitated, so that if there may have been harm at first, the very beauty of these productions has prevented its continuance, because they are no longer distinctively Canadian, and the ladies in what I maintain are the far more trying climates of Europe are also represented in furs by their photographer, so that this fashion is no longer a distinguishing characteristic of our photography; in proof of this I may mention that in a popular song which has obtained much vogue in London, the principal performer sings:—

“I’ve been photographed like this,  
 I’ve been photographed like that  
 I’ve been photographed in falling snow,  
 In a long furry hat.”

No doubt these winter photographs do give some of our friends in the Old Country the belief that it is the normal habit of young Canadian ladies to stand tranquilly in the deep snow, enjoying a temperature of 33° below zero, and it would certainly give a more correct idea of our weather were our Canadian ladies and gentlemen to be represented, not only in bright sunshine, in the spring greenery now so charming, when the woods are carpeted with fern and the lovely three-leaved white lily, but also amongst our beautiful forest glades in summer, wearing large Panama hats, and protected by mosquito veils; but I suppose there are obstacles in the way, and that even photographers, like other mortals, find it difficult to properly catch the mosquitoes. To pass to our present prospects, I think we can show we have good promise, not only of having an excellent local exhibition, but that we may, in course of time, look forward to the day when there may be a general art union in the country, and when for some more fortunate successor may be called upon to open the first exhibition of a ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY to be held each year in one of the capitals of our several Provinces; an academy which may, like that of the Old Country, be able to insist that each of its members or associates should on their election paint for it a diploma picture; an academy which shall be strong and wealthy enough to offer as a prize to the most successful students of the year money sufficient to enable them to pass more time in those European capitals where the masterpieces of ancient art can be seen and studied. Even now in the principal centres of population you have shown that it is perfectly possible to have a beautiful and instructive Exhibition, for besides the pictures bequeathed to any city it may always be attainable that an Exhibition of pictures be had on loan, and that these be shown beside the productions both in oil and water color of the artists of the year. It may be said that in a country whose population is as yet incommensurate with its extent people are too busy to toy with Art; but without alluding to the influence of Art on the mind, which has been so ably expressed in your address, in regard to its elevating and refining power, it would surely be a folly to ignore the value of beauty and design in manufactures; and in other countries blessed with fewer resources than ours, and in times which comparatively certainly were barbarous, the work of artists have not only gained for them a livelihood, but have pleased and occupied some of the busiest men of the time, the artists finding in such men the encouragement and support that is necessary. Long ago in Ireland the

beautiful arts of illumination and painting were carried on with such signal success that Celtic decoration, as shown in the beautiful knotted and foliated patterns that still grace so many of the tombstones and crosses of Ireland and the west of Scotland, passed into England, and, more strangely, even into France. The great monarch, Charlemagne, was so enchanted with the designs and miniatures of an Irish monk that he persuaded him to go to work at Paris, and for nearly two centuries afterwards the brilliant pages of French Bibles, Missals, and Books of Hours showed the influence of the culture, the talent and the taste of Erin. Surely here there should be opportunity and scope enough for the production of the works of the painter's hand. The ancient States of Italy, her cities and communities of the Middle Ages, were these who cherished most their native painters, and the names of many of those who covered the glowing canvases of Italy with immortal work are known often from the designation of some obscure township where they were born, and where they found their first generous recognition and support. Here in this great Province, full of the institutions and churches founded and built by the piety of past centuries as well as by the men now living, there should be far more encouragement than in poorer countries of old for the decoration of our buildings, whether sacred or educational. The sacred subjects which moved the souls of the Italian, German, Flemish and Spanish masters are eternal, and certainly have no lesser influence upon the minds and characters of our people. And if legendary and sacred art be not attempted, what a wealth of subjects is still left you,—if you leave the realm of imagination and go to that of the Nature which you see living and moving around you, what a choice is still presented. The features of brave, able and distinguished men of your own land, of its fair women, in the scenery of your country, and the magnificent wealth of water of its great streams, in the foaming rush of their cascades, overhung by the mighty pines or branching maples, and skirted with the scented cedar copses, in the fertility of your farms, not only here but throughout Ontario also, or in the sterile and savage rock scenery of the Saguenay. In such subjects there is ample material, and I doubt not that our artists will in due time benefit this country by making her natural resources and the beauty of her landscapes as well known as are those of the picturesque districts of Europe, and that we shall have a school here worthy of the growing greatness of our dearly loved Dominion.

It now only remains for me to declare this Gallery open, and to hope that the labors of the gentlemen who have carried out this excellent design will be rewarded by the appreciation of a grateful public.

His Excellency and Her Royal Highness, descending from the dais, shook hands with the President and members of the committee, after which they made a short survey of the Gallery, prior to taking their departure.

Shortly after this, in reply to a communication upon the same subject, His Excellency addressed the following letter to the Vice-President of the Ontario Society of Artists.

CITADEL, QUEBEC, June 8th, 1879.

DEAR MR. O'BRIEN,—I am only, comparatively speaking, a stranger here, and cannot know how such a scheme as that we have discussed will be taken up. I may, however, give you my impressions for whatever they are worth.

1st. That the existing Art Societies of each Province be requested to elect a certain number (which need not be much restricted) to represent the Province in a Dominion Art Association. Perhaps all present members of Provincial Societies might be willing to join.

2nd. That the Dominion Art Association (or whatever name is given to it) should consist of a President, Academicians, Associates, and Honorary Members. The last class might include all men willing to assist, everywhere, if approved of by the members who are not honorary.

3rd. That the objects of the Association be the exhibition of (1) Pictures on loan ; (2) Pictures by artists who have not exhibited at any Dominion Exhibition held at the city in which the Dominion Exhibition for the year is held ; (3) Architectural drawings ; (4) Designs for manufactures, these being drawings and designs for all sorts and kinds of useful things, from wearing apparel and embroidery to designs for new stoves and implements.

4th. That it be a standing rule that each capital city of each Province be visited in turn by the Dominion Exhibition, *leaving, of course, the local societies to have an exhibition of their own each year as they like.* This would bring the exhibition to Ottawa only after Halifax, Fredericton, Quebec and Toronto had been visited, namely, every fifth year. No. 4 seems most necessary, as the jealousy between our widely scattered cities is great. We may except Winnipeg and Victoria until they are united by rail ; and for the want of good communication, Prince Edward Island might also be left out as far as an exhibition to be held there is concerned. In the meantime, it should be satisfied, I think, with having some members elected to the Association, and the share in prizes any of its artists or draughtsmen might obtain.

It is a question whether, in such a widely extended population, men can be brought to work together for art purposes ; but the attempt might be made, and could at all events do no harm. Forgive the crudeness of these suggestions, and believe me, yours sincerely,

LORNE.

In September of the same year, His Excellency and Her Royal Highness visited the rooms of the Ontario Society of Artists in Toronto. On this occasion His Excellency presided at a meeting of the Artists, when the project of the formation of an Academy was discussed, and the following resolution unanimously adopted :

*Resolved*,—That the members of this Society, having listened to the valuable suggestions of His Excellency in regard to the enlargement of the Society's usefulness, by the establishment of a Royal Canadian Academy to embrace the whole Dominion (leaving all present art organizations intact), desire to express their cordial approval of His Excellency's views, and also that an early meeting of the Society be called for the purpose of taking practical steps in that direction."

After the business meeting was concluded His Excellency addressed a large assembly of gentlemen and ladies, honorary members and friends of the Society, in reply to a few remarks from the President, as follows :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am very sorry that time will not permit me to say one-half of what I should like to be able to mention to you this afternoon ; indeed we have other engagements, and must hurry away at once. The last speaker has mentioned that we had some conversation already amongst the members with reference to a project which I spoke of in the Art Gallery in Montreal as possible to be carried out in the future. I believe that since that time the project has found some favor amongst artists and their friends in the Dominion. It is, briefly, a suggestion whether it would not be advisable hereafter to have a central, or rather a national, academy of art in Canada. It would be well, perhaps—indeed, I think I should say certainly—to leave all the Provincial Associations exactly as they are at present. There should be no interference with them whatever, and they should keep any grants they have now, and hold in the future whatever meetings they hold at present. It might be at their option to waive their local meeting in the year in which the Dominion Academy happens to hold its visit at their town during the time at which they intended to hold their exhibition. But, as a general rule, I take it that the Central Association would probably hold its meeting at a different time from that usually occupied by the Provincial Association. It might be possible, perhaps, for the Central Association to hold its meeting every year in a different town or a different province, and that it should attract to the rooms others besides those interested in the pictures of the year, by having in addition a loan collection, and by having also exhibited on the walls of the building, and

admitted to the honors of the exhibition, architectural designs, and also, perhaps, designs for decorative furniture, as well as for engineering work, and other designs of an industrial nature. This might perhaps impart a broader basis of interest to the exhibitions, and might persuade more people to visit the rooms and take an interest in such a central association. In regard to this Provincial Association at Toronto, I must certainly congratulate the people of Toronto that they are already in possession of so excellent an institution. We not only expect the Spirit of Art in Canada, but she is already here, and I must say I have been put in the best possible spirits to-day by what we have seen on these walls. A few gentlemen have mentioned to me that they have not had many opportunities to compare their works with those of others; but certainly the great book of nature is always open to them, and any one travelling through this country with only half an eye for art can at any time find subjects worthy of a picture. I must apologise to you for the very imperfect sketch I have made this afternoon of the project I have mentioned, but I hope the suggestion of a Canadian academy may at all events be considered amongst you, and that we may in the course of time come to some good conclusion.

His Excellency the Governor-General having requested the officers of the Society of Artists to meet him on a subsequent day, drafted the following paper which he requested should be submitted to the Art Association of Montreal, that and the Ontario Society of Artists being the only important Art Societies existing in the Dominion.

“PROPOSITIONS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE  
MONTREAL ART ASSOCIATION.

1. That a Central Dominion Association be formed, to be called ‘The Canadian Academy.’ That when formed, the Association apply for permission to be called the ‘Royal Canadian Academy.’

2. That Academicians be selected from gentlemen and ladies of the present Art Association of Montreal and Toronto, and who exhibit pictures or sculpture for sale; and that by agreement between the officers of these societies a list of members be drafted, with power to add to the number, if it appear on inquiry that any other Art Association exists within the Dominion.



That in the first instance the Governor-General be asked by the Society to affirm this list, any subsequent co-operation on his part with the Society being a matter for after consideration.

3. That the Academicians so chosen shall be the governing body of the new Academy.

That they shall elect a certain number of new members at intervals to be subsequently determined.

That Associates be also elected by them.

That other gentlemen be invited by them to become honorary members.

4. That architecture and engraving be represented among the academicians.

5. That local associations hold their meetings as at present, and that the Dominion Academy shall in no way alter their present arrangements. Their meetings to be held or not at their option when the Academy exhibits in their city.

6. That the Academy hold the exhibition each year in a different city, taking by preference the capital cities of each Province.

That for the present Ottawa, Halifax, St. Johns, Montreal and Toronto be considered the cities best situated for the meetings of the first five years. The time of such exhibitions to be separately determined annually.

7. That the Exhibition consist of—

(1.) Oil and water color pictures of the year.

(2.) Sculpture.

(3.) That pictures and sculpture may be exhibited, on selection by committee, more than once at option of Committee to Arrange Details for any given year.

(4.) That architectural drawings be admitted on selection by committee.

(5.) That engravings be admitted on selection by committee.

(6.) That engineering drawings be admitted on selection by committee.

(7.) That drawings of machinery be admitted on selection by committee.

(8.) That drawings of industrial art and for house decoration and furniture be admitted on selection by committee.

(9.) That a loan collection be also shown at the same time."

In pursuance of this request of His Excellency, a list of members was proposed for His Excellency's consideration. This list, small at first, was, after much inquiry and correspondence with artists and others interested in the subject, considerably enlarged, and finally received His Excellency's approval.

His Excellency then directed that the constitution, mainly founded upon that of the Royal Academy of Arts, should be printed and sent to those whom he had nominated as the first members of the Academy. With a very few exceptions, all those nominated accepted the offered position, and undertook the responsibilities which thus devolved upon them.

His Excellency appointed the following gentlemen as officers of the Academy at its outset, after which the constitution provides that they are to be elected by the Academicians :

L. R. O'BRIEN, <i>President.</i>	M. MATTHEWS, <i>Secretary.</i>
N. BOURASSA, <i>Vice-President.</i>	JAMES SMITH, <i>Treasurer.</i>

The following letter of the President, having been approved by His Excellency, was addressed to the press in answer to numerous inquiries as to the proposed working and objects of the new society :

*To the Editor of the "Montreal Herald."*

DEAR SIR,—In the very kindly feeling with which the press and the public have received the project for the formation of a Canadian Academy of Arts, a good deal has been taken for granted, and there has been some natural misapprehension of its character at the outset of its career.

The term "Academy" at once suggests the "Royal Academy" of England and the "Academies" of other countries, while the title of "Academician" as obviously appears to invite comparison with the members of those academies;—institutions which have grown up under the fostering care of powerful governments through many generations of wealth and culture, and whose members are the ablest representative artists of the world. Here, it is needless to say, we have no such conditions and no such material, but it is not less evident that we have great need of the culture, education and skill that these academies represent; and that we have need of such encouragement and sympathy being accorded to our artists as will induce the ablest of them to remain in Canada, and also help to develop such latent talent as may exist by using it in the various branches of art.

His Excellency the Governor-General, coming from a country where the industrial and economic value of art is as well understood as its influence upon the higher mental culture of the people, was prepared from the first to do what was possible in organizing and developing our resources in this as in other directions. Shortly after his arrival in Canada, at the Art Association in Montreal he alluded to the formation of a Canadian Academy as something to be looked forward to in the future, while in conversation and correspondence with the artists he discussed its present practicability.

The artists of Canada were and are aware, probably better than any one outside of their ranks, how little consideration they are entitled to in the world of art, and no one can know as well as they do how much they have done, working under the greatest possible disadvantages.

In discussing the subject as placed before them by His Excellency, they felt that, while for them to form an academy, or to assume any title of academician or associate, would have been out of the question, to refuse co-operation in a project designed to advance the interests of the whole country, and which lay within the bounds of their special knowledge, would have been unpatriotic in the extreme. They joined heartily in the movement, accepting at His Excellency's hands not only an honor but a trust and a weighty responsibility. The objects of the Academy as set forth in the constitution must commend themselves to all loyally interested in the progress of Canada. The carrying out of those objects cannot be attained without much united effort, and must entail upon those who undertake it labor, thought, and a not inconsiderable sacrifice of time and its equivalent. We hope that in time the title of an Academician of the Canadian Academy may be valued as the recognition of a great and undoubted position in Art. At present it only means that the academicians are those whom His Excellency has honored by inviting them to join him in one part of his great work—the welding together and advancing in intellectual and material progress of those provinces which form the Dominion of Canada.

The opening Exhibition of the Academy at Ottawa, which is to be held in the months of February and March, will be the first opportunity there has ever been of comparing the work of artists from distant parts of the country; and in default of such comparison, it has been no easy task to decide who should and who should not be invited to become members of the Academy. I am aware, however, that His Excellency, in undertaking the difficult task of nominating the first list of members, has sought every means of informing himself of the names and standing of all who have done any good original art work throughout the country. It is not unlikely, under the circumstances, that some may have been admitted at too low a standard, and that others of unobtrusive merit may have been overlooked. In all such cases His Excellency is entitled to the most generous forbearance. All who can do good work are invited to send it to the Exhibition, where it will speak for itself. The academician list is only so far filled up as to form a working body, and the vacant seats

are to be filled up by election from among the associates as worthy candidates present themselves. The list of associates not being limited, there is room upon it for any good men who may have been overlooked, who come into the country from abroad, or who may rise from among the students. Before long we may fairly hope to place the standard of admission higher than is possible or prudent just now ; and with the improvement of public taste, and growing appreciation of good work, we need not fear the recognition and ultimate reward in Canada of those artists who have talent, and honestly make the best use of it.

It was hoped that the invitation to manufacturers to offer prizes for designs suited to their different undertakings would have been more largely responded to. Enough has been done, however, to stimulate invention among designers and art students, and to point the way to the attainment of one principal object of the Academy, namely : The establishment and appreciation of good art industry in Canada.

Some exception has been taken, naturally, to leaving Montreal and Toronto, the chief cities of the Dominion, last upon the list of places selected for holding exhibitions. This has been done at the express desire of His Excellency, and has been cordially assented to by the artists, although their immediate personal interests would have been best served by holding the exhibitions in the largest and most wealthy places ; but Montreal and Toronto have already efficient art organizations of their own, and I am confident that their liberal and public spirited citizens will be glad to lend a helping hand, in the first place, to those who have no such advantages. We may reasonably hope that in Halifax, St. John's and Quebec, the visit of the Academy will lead to the formation of such local art societies as may be best suited to their circumstances and available material.

Any city which fails to form and support some such local association can scarcely be deemed sufficiently advanced in civilization to justify a second visit of the Academy. London, in the west, has much to offer as inducement to hold an Academy Exhibition there, and the generous appreciation of art which has induced so many artists to make their home in the Province of Ontario, will no doubt soon make it advisable to add the Forest City to the list.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

L. R. O'BRIEN,

*President Canadian Academy of Arts.*

The Government of Canada gave the most generous and cordial support to the Academy, placing at its disposal a commodious building for the use of the opening Exhibition at Ottawa, admirably arranged for the purpose under the personal direction of the Hon. Mr. Langevin, Minister of Public Works.

On Saturday, March 6th, 1880, the first meeting of the members of the Academy was held, the Council for the ensuing year elected, and the first Exhibition opened by His Excellency the Governor-General. The following is the account of the proceedings at the opening as reported by the *Mail*.

OTTAWA, March 6, 1880.

To-night the first exhibition of the Canadian Academy of Arts was opened by His Excellency the Governor-General, in presence of a brilliant company. No more auspicious circumstances could have surrounded the initial public effort of the institution. Its patron is the Queen's representative. Among its warm supporters is H. R. H. the Princess Louise, from whom a welcome message was received to-night. The Dominion Government have manifested their desire to encourage art by placing the old Clarendon Hotel at the disposal of the Society, while its supporters already include leading men of all political opinions. The Academy has, moreover, been honored by receiving an intimation from the Queen, through His Excellency, that Her Majesty will be a purchaser from the walls of the Exhibition. It has received the general support of Canadian artists in the respective Provinces, between whom no bond of union has hitherto existed. The contributions of loan pictures are large and valuable. His Excellency, Her Royal Highness and suite, sent a most interesting collection, and the galleries of private lovers of art, such as Mr. Allan Gilmor, of this city, have been freely placed under contribution. The Academy has been at length fairly launched. It is unnecessary to review the circumstances which brought about its establishment. The task of nominating the first Academicians devolved upon His Excellency as patron. The following are the first to fill that distinguished position :—Allan Edson, Montreal ; W. N. Cresswell, Seaforth ; D. Fowler, Amherst Island ; J. A. Fraser, Toronto ; James Griffiths, London ; Eugene Hamel, Quebec ; R. Harris, Toronto ; J. Hopkins, Montreal ; H. Langley, Toronto ; L. R. O'Brien, Toronto ; Wm. Raphael, Montreal ; H. Sandham, Montreal ; Mrs. Schrieber, Toronto ; F. C. Van Luppen, Montreal ; James Smith, Toronto ; T. S. Scott, Ottawa ; William Storm, Toronto ; T. M. Martin, Toronto. The following have also been nominated Academicians, but have not yet complied with the condition of presenting a diploma picture :—G. T. Berthon, Toronto ; Forshaw Day, Kingston ; J. Forbes, Toronto ; O. R. Jacobi, Toronto ; H. Perré, Toronto ; Bell Smith, Sr., Hamilton ; W. T. Thomas, Montreal. The first business meeting of the Academy was held this afternoon, and according to constitution, the election of Academicians will subsequently devolve upon the Academicians and Associates.

## THE OPENING.

Shortly after eight o'clock His Excellency, accompanied by his staff, arrived, and was received by the officers of the Academy. He immediately took up a position on the dais and addressed the assembly.

## THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH.

HIS EXCELLENCY said :

Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is now my duty to declare this first exhibition of the Canadian Academy to be open to what, I am sure, will be an appreciative public. That this ceremony should take place to-day is characteristic of the energy with which any project likely to benefit our community is pushed in this country, for it is only ten months ago, on the occasion of the opening of the local art gallery at Montreal, that the proposal for the institution of the Canadian Academy of Arts was made. To-day the Academy is to be congratulated, not only upon being able to show the pictures and the works of art which you see here around you this evening, but upon the favorable reception which the appearance of such an association has received from all classes. I have indeed seen nothing but the kindest criticism, although I believe some gentlemen have been good enough to propose we should postpone the initiation of this institution for the present, and should wait for the short and moderate space of exactly a hundred years, and look forward to its incorporation in the year of grace 1980. It is difficult to meet such gentle criticism, but the Academy may be allowed to suggest that, although in the words of the old saying, "Art is long lived," yet that "life is short." Art will, no doubt, be in vigorous life in Canada a century hence, but on the other hand, we must remember that at that time these gentle critics may have disappeared from the scene, and they will themselves allow that it is for the benefit of the Academy that it should begin its existence while subject to their friendly supervision. It is impossible to agree with the remark that we have no material in Canada for our present purposes, when we see many excellent works on these walls; and if some do not come up to the standard we may set ourselves, what is this but an additional argument for the creation of some body which shall act as an educator in this manner. Now, gentlemen, what are the objects of your present effort? A glance at the constitution of the Society will show your objects are declared to be the encouragement of industrial art by the promotion of excellency of design, the support of schools of art throughout the country, and the formation of a national gallery of art at the seat of Govern-

ment. The first of these objects, the encouragement of good designs, receives an illustration in a room which I hope all present will make it a point to visit, a room on the second floor, where many tasteful and good designs have been exhibited in competition for prizes generously given by several gentlemen, who recognize the good effect such competitions are likely to have upon trade. Many of the best of these designs have been called forth by a prize offered by a member of the Legislature, and it is to be sincerely hoped that in future years his example, and the example of those who have acted in a similar manner, may be widely and generally followed. English manufacture, as you know, has become famous for its durability, French manufacture for its beauty and workmanship, and here, where we have a people sprung from both races, we should be able to combine these excellences, so that Canadian manufacture may hold a high place in the markets of the world. The next object of the Association is to be worked out on the same lines by the support afforded the local schools, and here I must emphatically impress on all who care for the encouragement of art in Canada that however popular the Academy exhibitions may become, however much you may be able to strengthen its hands in assisting Provincial efforts, the assistance it gives to any Provincial schools can only supplement and can never stand in the place of Provincial effort. It is true that the gentlemen belonging to the Academy give half of all they possess. One-half of any surplus is all their revenues can afford in aid of local efforts, but it is by no means likely that that amount will be great, as the exhibitions are to be held each year in a different city, so that each Province may in turn be assisted. It will probably be found best that any donation which can be made shall be given to that town in which the yearly exhibition is held. I hope, for instance, that this year it may be possible to give a grant in aid of a local school to be formed at Ottawa. With regard to the third object I have mentioned, the gentlemen who have been appointed Academicians have patriotically undertaken, as a guarantee of their interest in the welfare of art in Canada, that it shall be a condition of their acceptance of the office of Academicians, that they shall give, each of them, a picture which shall become national property, and be placed here in an art gallery. These works, of which you already have several around you, will be at the disposal of the Minister who may be charged with this trust, and it will be in his option to decide whether they shall be exhibited in other parts of the country or lent for purposes of art instruction for a time to local schools. If you are not tired of these objects, I would ask your attention for one moment to the organization by which it is proposed to accomplish these purposes. First, there are a certain number of gentlemen who, after the

model of similar institutions in other countries, where the plan has been found to work well, have been chosen as Academicians. Those comprise not only painters, but architects also, and designers, engravers, and sculptors. There are others again forming a wider circle, and following the same professions, who have been chosen as associates, from whose ranks the Academicians in the future will be elected. These gentlemen, the Academicians, will govern the institution. They have already been supported by very many men in the country who follow other professions, and who will have nothing to do with the governing of this Society, but who have been requested to join and give their aid, as entertaining a love for art and a desire that art should be enabled to assist in the most practical manner the interests of the country. It is probable that almost every gentleman of note in Canada will be on the roll. So much, then, for the purposes undertaken and the machinery by which these are to be accomplished. One word only as to the part which, at the request of several gentlemen, I have ventured temporarily to undertake. It seemed difficult, if not impossible, to get the body, as at present constituted, elected at the start, for scattered as the artists of the Dominion are, few knew the capabilities of others outside of his own neighborhood. Following, as we will have to do, therefore, an English precedent, it was thought best that the first list should be a nominated one. However carefully this has been attempted, some omissions and faults have been made, and these will be corrected, for the plan followed at the commencement will not be followed hereafter, but a general meeting be held during the time of the exhibitions, and elections will form part of the business of the assembly. Although it may be for the interests of the Academy that the Governor-General of the day should be the patron of the Society, you will find that the more self-governed it is the more healthful will be its prospects. At the outset, the position of patron may be somewhat like the position of that useful but ugly instrument with which many of us are perhaps but too familiar, namely, the snow-plough. At the first formation of an artists' society, he may be expected to charge boldly into mountains of cold opposition, and to get rid of any ice crusts in front of the train, but after the winter of trial and probation and the difficulties of beginning are over, and the summer of success has come, his position in regard to the artists must be more like that of a figurehead. I have, however, great faith in the power of artists to make a figurehead useful as well as ornamental, although I do not know that they have shown a proof of this to-day by making their figurehead deliver a speech, which it is well known figureheads never do except on the strictest compulsion. You may remember that in old days in Greece, an artist named Pygmalion carved a figure so beautiful that he himself fell in love



with his work, and infused his own life into the statue, so that it found breath and movement. I shall not expect the Academy always to be in love with its figurehead, but I believe you will be able to instil into him so much of your energy and vitality that, if the vessel gets into difficulties, you may enable him to come down from his place and even to give her a shove astern. Let me, at all events, express a hope, in which I believe all present will join, that the Canadian Academy, this fair vessel that we launch to-day, may never get into any trouble, but that from every city and Province of the Dominion she may receive a favoring breeze whenever and wherever she may show a canvas.

THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH.

The PRESIDENT (Mr. O'Brien) said :

May it please Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I think that not a few of those who are present in this room to-night will remember that a little more than a year ago, when Lord Dufferin paid his farewell visit to Toronto, a very pleasant gathering took place in the rooms of the Ontario Society of Artists. On that occasion he told us in a few eloquent words something of what might be expected from the advent of his successor and the illustrious Princess who accompanied him. I need not say to my brother artists, I need scarcely say to any in this room, how much more than fulfilled Lord Dufferin's prediction has been. (Applause.) His Excellency has most graphically compared himself to a snow-plough, and I think no one knows better than I do what mountains of difficulty our snow-plough has removed. (Loud applause). But when His Excellency turns the snow-plough into a figurehead, while I do not wish to impugn his comparison, instead of anticipating that he will take a less active part than he has done in the affairs of our Academy, I think we should rather compare him to the sun above us, which will continue to infuse life and vitality into all our efforts, even should he desire to withdraw from the more active labors connected with the Academy. I had intended to say something as to what His Excellency has done for us, but I cannot express to you the kindness, the dignified courtesy, the consideration he has manifested for all individual feeling and for the sensitiveness proverbial among artists. I can only read to you the first resolution recorded in the minutes of the Academy at the meeting held this afternoon, which expresses, though feebly, the feelings of the members. This resolution I was desired to communicate to His Excellency at the first convenient opportunity, and I will therefore now read it. The resolution runs:

*Resolved*,—That the members of the Canadian Academy of Arts deem it incumbent upon them, as their first official act in their corporate capacity, to record their grateful appreciation of the services of His Excellency the Governor-General on behalf of their infant association. The Society is indebted to the Marquis of Lorne, not merely for the suggestion that the time had come when, for the promotion of art culture in Canada, such an Association is indispensable, not only for the gracious permission to place his name and that of Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise as patrons of the Academy, but also for the active interest displayed by His Excellency in organizing the Society, his kind and zealous co-operation therein, and the unwearied patience with which he has considered every question of individual interest necessary to be decided upon in order to render our constitution useful and acceptable. The members of the Academy accordingly request the President to take the first convenient opportunity of communicating this resolution to His Excellency the Governor-General." (Loud applause.)

The President then presented to His Excellency a copy of the resolution suitably prepared, and continuing his remarks, said :

We all necessarily feel what a disappointment it is that Her Royal Highness is not able to be present with us this evening. (Applause.) That disappointment, however, is swallowed up in thankfulness at the mercy which has saved from deadly peril a life so dear to us. (Loud applause.) But, notwithstanding this, we must all feel that without that gracious presence our opening is shorn of half its glory. Besides expressing our thanks to the Governor-General, cordial and hearty thanks are due to the Government of Canada. (Applause.) Sir John Macdonald, on behalf of the Government, has placed at our disposal these most commodious quarters. (Renewed applause.) I think you must all remember the old nautical ballad about "The sweet little cherub that sits up aloft, and takes care of the life of poor Jack." The Hon. Mr. Langevin, I think, represents to us that cherub. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) From his commanding position on the wall [referring to his portrait suspended on the wall behind the dais] he is now looking down on us, and the benevolent expression on his face fairly represents the cordial and hearty assistance he has given to us. (Applause.) I think you will be pleased to learn that Her Majesty the Queen has also expressed a practical interest in her western children by becoming a purchaser from the walls of the Academy. (Loud and long continued applause.) The thanks of the Academy are due to the press, which has so kindly appreciated our endeavors, and also to those gentlemen (a much larger number than we anticipated, and I am led to believe the list will be

still largely increased) who have supported, by their influence and by most liberal contributions, the cause of the Academy. (Loud applause.)

The VICE-PRESIDENT, Mons. Bourassa, then spoke, in French, as follows:-

MILORD,—Je suis heureux de pouvoir exprime à Votre Excellence, au nom de la province et de la nationalité que j'ai l'honneur de représenter ici, ce soir, le sentiment de satisfaction et de gratitude que provoque, chez tous les amis de l'Art et du progrès, l'inauguration de l'Académie Canadienne des Beaux-Arts. Aujourd'hui, l'institution à laquelle vous avez donné la vie produit le premier acte de son existence, et ouvre, comme tout le fait conjecturer, dans une sphère supérieure, une voie plus favorable à la poursuite de l'idéal.

Pour ceux, Milord, qui, fidèles à une vocation malheureuse, se sont acharnés à en suivre les invincibles impulsions dans un pays où rien ne pouvait les favoriser, qui ont travaillé à leur tâche ingrate sans rémunération, sans approbation et presque sans sympathie; qui ont creusé leur sillon dans le désert et lutté seuls jusqu'à l'épuisement, sentant, dans cet ordre de choses, les élans de leur inspiration enchainés, leurs désirs les plus ardents et les plus légitimes étouffés, ne pouvant pas même trouver dans leurs propres œuvres cette satisfaction que recherche tout artiste véritable la réalisation du beau idéal! Pour ceux-là, Milord, l'œuvre à laquelle vous venez de mettre la main est le retour de l'espérance, le réveil d'un enthousiasme et d'une foi qui s'éteignaient; c'est le commencement de la réalisation du beau rêve de leur vie, c'est la réhabilitation d'une carrière qu'ils croyaient déjà condamnée à la stérilité et à l'oubli.

Je ne sais pas si mes confrères ont éprouvé la même impression que moi, à la nouvelle que vous aviez été désigné comme successeur de l'illustre et bien-aimé Lord Dufferin dans le gouvernement du Canada. Quant à moi, permettez-moi, Milord, de vous l'avouer, je pressentis que le règne qui allait s'ouvrir était plein de promesses pour la vie de l'Art dans notre pays. Les goûts élevés de Votre Excellence, le caractère et les aptitudes distingués de la fille du Prince qui a exercé une si puissante influence sur le développement artistique de l'Angleterre, me faisaient entrevoir les lueurs d'une aurore nouvelle. Ces sentiments n'ont pas été illusoire, et ce soir, un an à peine après votre arrivée sur cette terre, tous ceux qui vous entourent dans ce moment ont le bonheur de constater avec moi que cette aurore nouvelle s'est brillamment levée.

A toutes les époques de la civilisation où l'on voit l'Art prendre un magnifique développement, se trouve un nom élevé qui apparaît comme le centre de cette nouvelle manifestation du génie humain. En Grèce, ce nom fut Périclès; à Rome, il fut Mécène; dans l'Italie moderne, Médicis; en France, Louis XIV. Il y a des rayons de l'intelligence qui ne peuvent d'abord briller que sur les sommets, et la main de ceux qui habitent ces sommets peut seule les y attirer. Tel a été le rôle de ces créateurs des brillantes périodes de l'humanité.

Quand une société ne trouve pas dans ses aptitudes et ses besoins, dans ses lois et les éléments sociaux qui la régissent, le ressort qui pousse vers les choses élevées de l'intelligence et une civilisation supérieure, c'est la mission d'un homme qui personnifie en lui la puissance, l'intelligence et le goût suprêmes, de produire ce résultat.

Quelques-uns de vos illustres prédécesseurs, Milord, ont appliqué leur esprit d'élite à des travaux, alors plus urgents que celui du développement de l'Art. Votre Excellence a cru qu'il était temps d'attirer les regards de la foule vers d'autres intérêts que celui du développement matériel et de la poursuite trop souvent aveugle et égoïste de la richesse pour la richesse. Elle a cru que la vie d'une nation n'est pas seulement une affaire, un calcul d'intérêt, la marche automatique d'un rouage; mais qu'elle est aussi la manifestation d'aspirations plus élevées; la satisfaction de passions sublimes, plus expansives, plus généreuses; la jouissance de plaisirs plus délicats; une mission plus immortelle dans l'humanité tout entière. Elle a compris que la patrie ne doit pas seulement être vêtue, nourrie et d'humeur passable, mais qu'elle doit être, en outre, pour tous ses enfants, la plus belle, la plus noble, la plus intelligente, la plus aimable, et la plus glorieuse entre toutes les autres, afin qu'elle puisse conserver toujours leur admiration, leur amour, leur dévouement absolu. Voilà pourquoi vous avez tendu la main vers nous, et vous avez voulu attirer à vous ceux qui poursuivent la recherche du beau, afin de leur rendre le chemin plus aisé et le but plus séduisant. Je crois que cette œuvre généreuse, à laquelle s'est si gracieusement et si efficacement associée Son Altesse Royale, la Princesse Louise, ne rencontrera pas seulement l'approbation et la reconnaissance de ceux qui ont parcouru jusqu'à ce jour, dans notre pays, avec tant de déboires et de mécomptes, les carrières de l'Art; mais encore de tous ceux qui ont des goûts élevés, qui désirent voir leur pays se développer dans les conditions particulières où l'a placée la Providence, avec la plénitude de son génie et le caractère propre qui le feront distinguer des autres peuples.

Milord, nous ne savons pas durant combien de temps il vous sera permis de gouverner ce pays et de développer votre œuvre; nous presumons que vos efforts ne pourront peut-être pas faire surgir de suite ces réunions de grands maîtres qui ont illustré les grands règnes; mais nous avons la confiance que se que vous venez de fonder subsistera toujours, et que, s'il nous naît des maîtres, tôt ou tard, c'est d'abord à vous qu'ils devront d'être grands. Avant Louis XIV., en France, il y eut François 1er. Celui-ci n'aurait-il fait que recueillir au chevet de Léonard de Vinci le dernier soupir du grand peintre Italien, qu'il aurait montré, par cet acte de respect, le prix qu'il attachait aux œuvres de génie, et donné à ses sujets l'ambition d'en produire.

Je suis heureux, Milord, de vous dire que les artistes apprécient déjà quelques-uns des résultats produits par la création de l'Académie. Ils ont eu l'occasion de se rencontrer, de se connaître; ils ont déjà contracté ce lien de famille qui féconde et soutient la vie de l'Art. L'Art est un langage qui, heureusement,

ne porte pas, comme les idiomes de races diverses, les nuances violentes des passions nationales et des rancunes séculaires: on peut le parler et s'entendre d'un camp à un autre, et quand on a pris l'habitude de cette conversation on oublie facilement que l'on n'était pas frères.

Avant de terminer, Milord, nous devons vous exprimer le profond regret que nous éprouvons de ne pas voir ici, ce soir, Son Altesse Royale la Princesse Louise. Nous prions Votre Excellence de vouloir bien être l'interprète de nos sympathies pour Elle, et de lui exprimer le grand désir que nous sentons tout d'apprendre que sa santé est complètement rétablie. Son Altesse Royale avait bien voulu aider à préparer la fête qui nous réunit aujourd'hui; son absence nous prive de l'une des plus sensibles jouissances que nous en attendions, et de l'occasion de lui témoigner personnellement notre reconnaissance pour l'intérêt et la part de travail qu'elle a bien voulu donner à la création de l'Académie.

At the conclusion of Mons. Bourassa's address, HIS EXCELLENCY, having requested the President to step forward, read the following message from the Princess:—

*M. Bourassa and Gentlemen of the Academy:*

I desire to give you a message from the Princess, in her own words. She says that she regards it as a great privation to be unable to be present this evening, and to look upon those works of Canadian art around us. Her whole heart and soul are, as you may well believe, with you in the object for which we have met to-night. She wishes the Academy all prosperity, and hopes you will remember that any help she can give you will always be yours.

On the 17th May, 1880, the following memorial was, by order of the Council of the Academy, addressed to His Excellency the Governor-General, and by him forwarded to the Queen:—

*To His Excellency the Right Honorable Sir John Douglas Sutherland Campbell (commonly called the Marquis of Lorne), Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor-General of Canada and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c.:*

The Memorial of the CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS, presented on behalf of the said Academy by the Council thereof, respectfully prayeth:

That whereas, the Canadian Academy of Arts has been founded by YOUR EXCELLENCY and HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS LOUISE, for the purposes of cultivating and improving the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and industrial design in the Dominion of Canada, the members of the said Academy earnestly desire that the said Canadian Academy of Arts should receive

the direct and personal recognition and patronage of HER GRACIOUS MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA, and as a token thereof, your memorialists respectfully pray that Her Majesty would graciously be pleased to confer upon the said Academy the name and title of the ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS.

And your memorialists will, as in duty bound, &c., &c.

Signed on behalf of the Council, L. R. O'BRIEN,  
*President.*

The gracious answer to this memorial is contained in the following despatches.

COPY.

OTTAWA, 16th July, 1880.

SIR,—I am desired by His Excellency the Governor-General to forward to you the accompanying copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, from which you will learn that Her Majesty has been pleased to confer upon the Canadian Academy the name and title of "ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS."

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN KIDD,  
For the Gov.-Gen'l, Sec'y.

L. R. O'BRIEN, Esq., 27 Grenville Street, Toronto.

COPY.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY TO THE MARQUIS OF LORNE.

CANADA, 74.]

DOWNING STREET, 22nd June, 1880.

MY LORD,—I have the honor to inform you that I duly received your despatch No. 133 of the 11th of May, and that I have laid before the Queen the memorial address to you by the President of the Canadian Academy of Arts, praying that Her Majesty would be pleased to confer upon the Academy the name and title of "ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS." I have now to acquaint you that the Queen has graciously approved that the prayer of the memorial be acceded to, and I request that you will communicate to the President of the Academy this notification of Her Majesty's pleasure.

I have, &c.,

KIMBERLEY.  
GOV.-GEN'L THE RIGHT HON. THE MARQUIS OF LORNE, K. T., K. C. M. G.

*Form of Diploma granted by the Governor-General to Academicians of the Royal  
Canadian Academy.*

FOUNDED BY THE MARQUIS OF LORNE AND THE PRINCESS LOUISE,  
1880.

*(Governor General's Signature).*

*To our trusty and well beloved*

*Esq.*

GREETING:

Whereas, a Society for the purposes of cultivating and improving the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture and Industrial Design has been established in the Dominion, and with the sanction of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, has been entitled the ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS;

Therefore, in consideration of your great skill in the Art of you are by these presents constituted and appointed to be one of the forty Academicians of the said Royal Canadian Academy;

And you are hereby granted all the honors, privileges and emoluments thereof, according to the tenor of the Institution.

This honorable distinction is the more readily conferred upon you, as the Governor-General and the members of the Royal Canadian Academy are firmly persuaded that you will, upon every occasion, exert yourself in support of the honor, interest and dignity of the said establishment, and that you will faithfully and assiduously discharge the duties of the several offices to which you shall be nominated.

Your name will be forthwith inserted in the roll of Academicians, and you will subscribe the obligation in the form and manner prescribed.



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